



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

Second Review of Child Safeguarding Practice
in the
Irish British Province of the Society of the Divine Word
(Divine Word Missionaries)
undertaken by
The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the
Catholic Church in Ireland (National Board)

Date of Review Report: December 2021

CONTENTS

	Page
Background:	3
Introduction:	3
Process of Review:	5
Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments:	7
Standard 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations:	10
Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant:,	12
Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent:	13
Standard 5: Training and Support for keeping Children Safe:	14
Standard 6: Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message:	15
Standard 7: Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards:.....	16
Conclusion:	17

Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (the National Board) was established in 2006 to provide advice, services and assistance in furtherance of the development of the safeguarding of children within the Roman Catholic Church on the island of Ireland; and to monitor compliance with legislation, policy and best practice, and to report on these activities as is comprehensively set out in the Memorandum of Association of the Company.

Church authorities who have entered into an agreement with the National Board through signing a Memorandum of Understanding have committed to following *Safeguarding Children - Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. In order to assess compliance, the Provincial of the Society of the Divine Word invited the National Board in July 2021 to undertake a review of practice. The Society was previously reviewed in 2013 under the *Safeguarding Children - Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2008*. The report of the first review can be found on the Society's website at <https://svdibp.org/2017/02/14/review-of-safeguarding-practice-in-the-irish-british-province-of-the-society-of-the-divine-word-divine-word-missionaries/>, and on the National Board website www.safeguarding.ie/publications.

The purpose of this second round of reviews is to assess the practice against the Catholic Church in Ireland's current standards as detailed in *Safeguarding Children - Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. The Review seeks a level and quality of evidence to provide:

- Public confidence that the Church body is safe for children;
- Affirmation to Child Safeguarding personnel that they are doing the right things well;
- Confirmation to the Church authority that what they want to be done is in fact being done;
- Independent verification of Self-Audit – or correction and/or improvement of Self-Audit;
- Opportunities for learning.

Introduction

The Society of the Divine Word is an international Missionary Society, which is also known as the Divine Word Missionaries, and is often referred to as the SVDs (Societas Verbi Divini in Latin). It is described in detail on its international website at <https://www.svdmissions.org/> and in the 2013 National Board Review Report. There are approximately 6,000 Divine Word Missionaries working in 80 countries. The Society has 33 administrative units, either full Provinces or Regions, and the Irish British Province is one of these. The Irish British Province has its Provincial House in south Dublin, in addition to which it also has houses in north Dublin, in Maynooth, Co. Kildare and in Co. Roscommon.

The deployment of Society membership of the Irish British Province in Ireland is as follows:

1. The Provincial Office building in south Dublin is also a residence for eight (8) members of the Society, of whom two (2) are retired;
2. The residence in north Dublin is home to five (5) members of the Society, of whom two (2) are retired or semi-retired;
3. The building at Maynooth, Co. Kildare in which a number of independent activities operate, is an SVD Community with eighteen (18) members, of whom five (5) are retired or semi-retired, and three are seminarians; and

4. Donamon Castle, Co. Roscommon is an SVD Community with fourteen (14) resident members, of whom five (5) are retired or semi-retired.

Two members of the Society live in a parochial house in a parish in which they minister under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Dublin. In addition to these two, another seven (7) members live in parishes, but are assigned to an SVD House Community, as is required of members of the Society.

Any member of the Society who is in a ministry that brings him into direct contact with children is working under the auspices of a diocese or a hospital, and he is subject to the child safeguarding policies and procedures of the external organisation in which he works.

The age distribution of the members who were resident in Ireland at the time of the Review was as follows:

Age	Number	%	%
30 - 39	8	17.5	30.5
40 - 49	2	4.3	
50 - 59	4	8.7	
60 - 69	4	8.7	8.7
70 - 79	18	39.1	60.8
80 +	10	21.7	
Total	46	100	

Of the eight who are between 30 and 39, three were seminarians. One member of age 100 years unfortunately died during the period of the Review fieldwork.

The roles being undertaken by SVD members who are working are:

Role	Number
Rector – (one in each residence)	4
Parish – (full-time or relief)	14
Management and administration	4
Hospital chaplaincy	1
Various (not including parish ministry)	2
Total	25

An effort has been made in this second table to avoid double counting, as some members undertake more than one specific role; but it is as accurate as it can be in reflecting the work being undertaken. The numbers in both of these tables are subject to change quite regularly, as members of the Society arrive into or leave Ireland.

Process of Review

A meeting via Zoom took place on June 10th, 2021 between the Provincial and the Designated Liaison Person of the Society and the CEO and the Director of Safeguarding of the National Board to agree on the scope and format of the proposed Review. After this meeting, the Provincial wrote to the CEO on July 21st, 2021 requesting a National Board Review. During August and September, 2021, the Provincial Secretary of the Society kindly provided all of the pre-fieldwork information requested by the National Board, and assisted in setting up the practical arrangements for the Review.

The reviewer visited the Provincial Headquarters of the Society's Irish British Province on September 21st 2021 to clarify arrangements with the Provincial Secretary; and the two site visits to conduct the Review itself were made on October 6th and October 15th, 2021. In addition to these visits, Zoom interviews were conducted with Society members in various safeguarding roles. A feedback Zoom meeting was held on October 26th. The details discussed at that meeting were sent to the Provincial in the form of a two-page written document on November 8th, 2021.

In the course of the Review, the following people were interviewed:

- Fr. Tim Lehane, Provincial;
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP);
- The Provincial Secretary;
- The member responsible for Garda Vetting;
- The external trainer, who had been a previous DLP¹, who also provides monitoring for a member who is subject to a Management Plan;
- The Safeguarding Committee;
- A priest member who provides family ministry to members of the Polish community in Ireland.

Since the end of the fieldwork, there has been correspondence with the Provincial Secretary to clarify information related to the Review.

The Divine Word Missionaries requested a review because its last review was in 2013, and they meet the criteria for a Review. While individual members of the Society have limited contact with children and young people from time to time, the Society does not have any direct ministry with children and young people, and this is a significant change since the Review conducted in 2013. Some activities previously managed by the Society that involved the occasional attendance or participation of young people have now been taken over by limited companies. The pandemic restrictions have also reduced the amount of incidental contacts with children and young people.

¹ This DLP was in post during the 2013 Review, having been recently appointed. She is a lay woman and continues to support the Society when requested to do so, as a trainer and as a child safeguarding consultant. She was followed by a DLP who is a priest member of the Society, who in turn handed over to another DLP who is a priest member of the Society. That priest then handed over to the current incumbent. Reference to the previous DLP in this report is solely to the lay woman who had been DLP earlier.

The reviewer would like to thank Fr. Tim Lehane, the DLP, the Provincial Secretary, and all other safeguarding personnel who assisted so willingly in the Review process.

An assessment of practice under each standard is set out below.

Standard 1: Creating and maintaining safe environments

Church bodies provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. They provide access to good role models whom the children can trust, who respect, protect and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

Compliance with Standard 1 is measured through 10 Indicators. However, as the SVDs do not have direct ministry with children, not all of these Indicators are fully applicable.

The Society has very few directly employed people, but all recruitment is conducted appropriately and safely. While there are a total of sixteen (16) lay staff working in three of the four SVD houses, most of these are employees of three companies that were established to keep their work separate from the ministries of the Society – Kairos, and Student Accommodation Management (SAM) in Maynooth, and the DWM Cards Printing Works in Donamon, Co. Roscommon. Any of these employees who has contact with children and/or young people is Garda vetted.

Every society member in active ministry is Garda vetted. The reviewer interviewed the priest member who liaises with AMRI (the Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland) regarding the vetting process, and he also examined the vetting records. These are maintained on a computer spreadsheet which records the individual's name, email address, vetting history/status, i.e. when last vetted; if now retired; re-vetting if required, by date. All members, bar one who had moved to the UK, had their vetting up to date at the time of the Review.

Compliance with Standard 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 are difficult to review, due to a lack of direct ministry with children. However, each of the SVD houses has a written protocol which sets out what is expected of each resident member. The protocols are accepted by the vote of the residents. These are similar, one-page documents, and they are tailored to the particular situation in each house. For example, the Donamon Castle protocol is headed *Guidelines for creating a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults at the Divine Word Missionaries Residence at Donamon, Co Roscommon*. It has six sections, which are the same as for the other three houses:

1. Children visiting must be accompanied by a parent or someone nominated by their parent;
2. Identified parts of the house and grounds are public areas, and parts are private and restricted to the residents;
3. A child can only be in a restricted access area of the house if accompanied by their parent and with the permission of a resident;
4. 'Any member of the house community who observes behaviour of an adult, child or young person within the house which he considers to be unacceptable should challenge this in an appropriate way and bring it to the attention of the designated Child Protection Representative, (who is currently the Rector of the Community)';
5. 'House members should listen to any concerns brought to them by parents and/or children and respond to these in a sensitive and caring way ensuring that this information is shared with the Child Protection Representative/Community Rector';
6. 'The policies, procedures/guidance of the Catholic Church in Ireland must be adhered to by the members of the House Community', and the document states where these can be sourced.

The reviewer is satisfied that these protocols are sufficient for the very limited contact that members of the Society might have with children and young people at the four residences and their grounds.

Due to the restrictions imposed to manage the Covid-19 pandemic, the activities of the Society have been constrained for the past 18 months or so. The impact of this has been that members of the general public have not been allowed to attend Mass and other liturgies at Donamon Castle, and local sports clubs catering for children and young people have not used the sports fields at that location. The Society does not allow individuals and groups to use facilities at its two Dublin residences, while the Maynooth building's public areas are managed by two separate companies. Following discussion with the Provincial, he will remind the Rectors of the Donamon Castle and the Maynooth communities of their responsibilities under Standard 1.5, regarding the use of their facilities by external groups, if and when such use may recommence.

The Society has a Whistleblowing Policy, signed by the Provincial in August 2018. This has not been used so far.

While there is a HR Complaints Policy for staff, there is no policy that covers complaints about safeguarding that are not allegations per se. However, due to the lack of ministry with children and young people, this is not required. On the Society's website, there is guidance for reporting a safeguarding concern at <https://svdibp.org/2020/07/02/reporting-a-safeguarding-concern/>. The wording states that:

If you have a Safeguarding concern or wish to report an allegation of child abuse, please contact the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) at the contact details below. The DLP is responsible for receiving and managing concerns and complaints related to Divine Word Missionaries personnel in Ireland

Underneath this, the contact details for the SVDs, Tusla and for An Garda Síochána are all provided. The Provincial has established a procedure within the province that no SVD priest can minister in an external organisation or Church body until he – the Provincial - has reached agreement about this with the relevant person-in-charge or Church authority. In this way he ensures that Standard 1.10 is complied with. Two SVD priests minister in a parish in the Archdiocese of Dublin, and it is clear from that parish's website section on Child Safeguarding that the policies and procedures of the archdiocese are the ones that are being followed.

The reviewer met with the SVD Safeguarding Committee to discuss its work. Four of the five committee members are priests of the Society, and the fifth member is the lay Provincial Secretary. The Safeguarding Committee has been in existence since March 2015, and it has met on 24 occasions since then. The committee is responsible for safe recruitment; maintaining a safe environment; accessing human resources needed to implement best practice; audits; training audits; and training. Members are selected by the Provincial Council and serve for a period of three years. The new DLP is also the new Chair of the Safeguarding Committee. There is one member who is based in the UK.

The reviewer also read the committee's Minutes file in which discussions of the following items are recorded:

- Policy and planning
- Recruitment and Induction, and briefing seminarians
- Garda vetting updates
- Testimonials of Good Standing
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- House Safeguarding Reps
- Adult Code of Behaviour
- Whistle-blowing policy
- Mini-audits of SVD premises by external consultant
- Groups using SVD premises
- Society members with external ministry, and contracts with dioceses for SVD members ministering in these;
- Mandatory Reporting
- Training and Support
- Communications, including the website
- Self-audits
- International transferral strategies
- The committee's own training (undertaken with the National Board in October on 2019)
- Diocesan visit to Donamon
- Misean Cara
- Re-appointments of committee members

While the number of meetings since the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions have been fewer, the committee has clearly been both busy and effective. The reviewer has suggested that the membership of the Safeguarding Committee would be enhanced by the appointment of another lay person, preferably a woman, and someone who has no previous links with the Society, but who has expertise in one or more of the areas covered by the committee.

The reviewer notes that in 2017, the Safeguarding Committee oversaw the distribution of the *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*, and that the members and staff who received these were asked to sign a written statement saying that they had received this document, had read it and agreed to abide by it. This practice needs to be maintained. The reviewer is aware that the four House Protocols do contain a statement that 'The policies, procedures/guidance of the Catholic Church in Ireland must be adhered to by the members of the House Community'.

Standard 1 is met.

Standard 2: Procedures for responding to child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations

Church bodies have clear procedures and guidance on what to do when suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations arise regarding a child's safety or welfare that will ensure there is a prompt response. They also enable the Church to meet all national and international legal and practice requirements and guidance.

The Divine Word Missionaries have adopted in full *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*, and the Guidance and procedures associated with it. A Child Safeguarding Statement is accessible on the Society's website at <https://svdibp.org/2018/03/13/child-safeguarding-statement/>.

There have been no new allegations concerning members of the Society since the previous Review in 2013.

Brief description of Case Management

The reviewer examined five (5) case management files at the Provincial Offices in Dublin. These were retrieved from a locked filing cabinet in a locked strong-room.

The first file records a report to the Society, originally made in 2011. A similar report was made to an Irish diocese. The file contains a lot of correspondence between the complainant's solicitor and the Society, and between the Society and the diocese. However, no Society member has been identified and no details of what has been alleged have ever been provided. The case file was finally closed in 2018, as there were insufficient grounds to warrant keeping it open.

The remainder of the case files were reviewed in full in 2013.

There is some similarity between cases 2 and 3, in that the abuses admitted to by these two men happened outside of Ireland, but in different countries. Both men are still alive, but they are elderly and neither enjoys good health. They live in an SVD house under supervision and subject to a Covenant of Care (behaviour contract). Neither man is sufficiently mobile to be able to leave their residence on their own. The previous DLP has a role in monitoring one man, and in consulting on the second man's care. The case files show that a great deal of consideration has been given to the management of both men, with reports to the statutory agencies being made, and commissioned risk assessments having been conducted.

The priest in case number 4 is in ministry and in good standing. No statement of complaint was made by the complainant to the Gardaí. The matter was first raised in 2008, and the case was presented to the National Board's National Case Management Committee (NCMC) on two occasions. The Provincial has provided his *votum* with supporting documents to the Society's Superior General. The case file was closed in 2015, as there is no case to answer.

The final case file examined relates to a priest who had died since the 2013 Review. As in other SVD cases, the previous DLP was involved in monitoring this priest who was removed from ministry. The case was reported to both the Gardaí and Tusla. He lived under the conditions of a precept issued by the Superior General in Rome for the last five years of his life, and he died in 2020.

There is evidence on the case files that the Society has made appropriate reports to the two statutory authorities, and has engaged with the National Board by seeking advice and guidance on case management.

This standard is met.

Standard 3: Care and Support for the complainant

Complainants who have suffered abuse as children receive a compassionate response when they disclose their abuse. They, and their families, are offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care.

There have been four complainants in Ireland, none of who have made a statement of complaint to the Gardaí. In the case of one complainant, the Society has requested the diocese that has also received the same complaint to offer the *Towards Healing* counselling service to them. The second complainant was in counselling with *Towards Healing* when they made a disclosure which was referred by that agency to the Gardaí. The Society reached out to the other two complainants, one of who requested and was provided with practical support, and the second of who declined the offer of support and assistance. Both had complained about the priest member who died in 2020.

The victims (number not established) of two other priest members of the Society live in four different countries in the developing world where the priests worked as missionaries. The then Provincial wrote to the relevant Provinces in 2013 to seek any further information from their files; and according to the replies he received, there were no records of allegations or concerns. The Society has made efforts to identify and then contact these people, but the abuse admitted to happened between 1965 and 1991. There are very real challenges in accurately identifying the victims; and there is a significant risk in approaching adults who were abused in the past but who have not themselves requested supportive outreach. In addition, in at least one of the countries involved, reporting child safeguarding concerns to the police authorities can have very negative outcomes for any victim identified.

Standard 3 is met.

Standard 4: Care and management of the Respondent

The Church authority has in place a fair process for investigating and managing child safeguarding concerns. When the threshold for reporting has been reached, a system of support and monitoring for respondents (cleric or religious) is provided.

There have been no new allegations about any member of the SVD s since the previous Review of 2013.

There are three living respondents within the Society in Ireland, all of who have been through a balanced civil law and canon law process, two of who have been out of ministry for years and a third who has been carefully returned to ministry.

The case management files which were very poor when examined in 2013 have now been completely restructured, and are comprehensive in their coverage of decisions and actions taken since the first Review. The previous lay DLP has been very instrumental in advising on case management, while the Provincial Secretary has done very effective work in bringing the case files up to the required level of quality.

One respondent was given and returned the Review questionnaire in which he stated that he is satisfied with the supports that he has received from the Society. He accepts the terms of the Covenant of Care, and states that he has been fairly and properly treated.

This Standard is met.

Standard 5: Training and Support for keeping children safe

Church personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role, in order to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to safeguard and protect children.

Despite not having any direct ministry with children, the Society has a three-year Training and Communications Plan 2021 – 2024, developed by the Safeguarding Committee. Previous plans examined were for the three years 2015 – 2018; and 2018 – 2021.

In 2017, all SVD members living in Ireland and all Society lay employees attended basic child safeguarding training provided by the previous DLP. This coincided with the distribution of the 2016 National Board Safeguarding Children policy and standards document to everyone within the Society.

The Training Record 2020 was examined. This lists the number and name of the member, their location, the training course taken, and the date of the course. Certificates of Attendance by Society members at all training events are retained on file in the Provincial HQ. In February 2020, twenty-nine (29) members attended core safeguarding training provided by the Society for them, and a further seven (7) attended safeguarding training provided by a diocese. In 2018, 16 lay staff employed by the Society, or within the limited companies located in Society premises in Maynooth and Co. Roscommon, also received core training; and in 2020, a further 3 lay staff received this training.

Clearly the restrictions created by the Covid-19 pandemic have had a negative impact on the ability of the Society to provide in-person training opportunities for members, but virtual National Board training has been utilised when available. The previous DLP is commissioned from time to time to provide training to members and to lay staff.

The new DLP is a returned missionary who was only appointed in April this year. In the country in which he last ministered, he had to manage child safeguarding issues from time to time. He needs to participate in the next National Board training for DLPs.

On the basis of the data examined, this Standard is met.

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Church bodies appropriately communicate the Church's child safeguarding message.

It is hard to evaluate compliance by the Society with this Standard, due to the very limited interaction members have with children and young people and their families. However, there is a Training and Communications Plan 2021 – 2024, in the communications section of which the following are set out: Communication within the internal Newsletter of the Society to all members on safeguarding matters and developments discussed at the most recent Provincial Council meeting; communication with Irish Community leaders by the Safeguarding Committee, both before and following a committee meeting; and using the Society's website to communicate safeguarding issues; this can be accessed at <https://svdibp.org/safeguarding/>. This website has a dedicated page on Reporting a Safeguarding Concern.

Prior to this Review, the Society placed a notice on its website with the following message:

Safeguarding Children

Posted by SVD IBP

The Society of the Divine Word (SVD), also known as the Divine Word Missionaries, has invited the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) to conduct a review of its child safeguarding practice.

If you have any views about Child Safeguarding in the Society of the Divine Word, we invite you to come forward to us by contacting the Provincial, Fr. Timothy Lehane SVD at provincial@svdireland.com, and / or to the NBSCCCI (01-5053124).

If you wish to report a child safeguarding concern, please contact Fr. Garrett Roche SVD at safeguarding@svdireland.com or An Garda Síochána at Garda National Protective Services Bureau, Harcourt Square, Dublin 2 (01 6663430), or TUSLA at www.tusla.ie

Fr. Timothy Lehane SVD
Provincial
Divine Word Missionaries
1 Pembroke Road
Dublin 4

Date 22nd September 2021

One priest member of the Society who is Polish has been involved over a number of years in a family ministry with Polish families in Ireland. This is 'Domestic Church', the family branch of the Polish Light-Life Movement. In planning for this external ministry he engaged the then DLP and the Provincial Secretary as advisors to help him ensure that the family events would be compliant with best practice regarding child safeguarding. As part of his very careful preparation, he consulted the Irish Episcopal Council for Immigrants (IECI), and the IEC Council for Marriage and the Family. He also sought permission from three dioceses to conduct this ministry in their administrative areas, and he was Garda vetted by each as part of their conditions for him doing so. This priest has also served for six years on the Society's Child Safeguarding Committee and is very aware of this dimension of all ministries that can involve children and young people.

This Standard is met.

Standard 7: Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards

The Church body develops a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the safeguarding standards. This action plan is reviewed annually. The Church body only has responsibility to monitor, evaluate and report on compliance with the indicators under each standard that apply to it, depending on its ministry.

The Society is not large enough or sufficiently engaged with ministry to children and young people to warrant a comprehensive self-audit. The Provincial however does receive annual reports from the DLP on safeguarding within the houses and ministries of the SVD in Ireland. The DLP reports for the years 2015 through 2019 were examined. The National Board did not require self-audits to be completed for 2020. However, the Society's DLP did to generate a detailed report on safeguarding during 2020.

There have also been reports from the Safeguarding Committee to the Provincial and Provincial Council for the years 2015 through 2020. These reports constitute the self-audit element of the quality assurance of safeguarding within the Society.

The Society has a three-year Safeguarding Plan, drawn up by its Safeguarding Committee. The plan is for the period 2021 – 2024. This is the third such plan since the first one was completed in 2015. While the impact of the pandemic is obvious in terms of the postponement of activity, it should be the primary objective of the Safeguarding Committee in 2022 to update the Three-Year Safeguarding Plan, and amend the dates so that it will cover the period 2022 to 2025. This does not have to be a complicated or lengthy document, especially in light of the Society having no direct ministry with children and young people. The format previously adopted, of addressing the four child safeguarding Standards, 1, 5, 6 and 7 is useful, with specific objectives, actions, allocated responsibility, implementation dates and review dates set for each Standard.

The Provincial invited the National Board to conduct this Review. His predecessor had also issued a similar invitation. The response to the recommendations made in the previous Review Report of 2013 are available on the SVD website at <https://svdibp.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/follow-up-on-recommendations-feb-2015.pdf> The reviewer established through interviews and examination of documents and records that the follow up was completed, and the level of compliance in the current Review demonstrates this.

Standard 7 is met.

The reviewer conducted a feedback session with the Provincial, DLP and Provincial Secretary via Zoom on October 26th 2021, in which he informed them that the Society is compliant with all seven Standards.

The following observations and suggestions for further improvements were made by the reviewer in that meeting:

- The Safeguarding Committee requires at least one new external member, and it needs a renewed focus under the new Chairperson;
- The Covenants of Care which are in place for two members should be reviewed annually, and amended as required.
- The website could make available internal policies and procedures, e.g. complaints, whistleblowing etc. available under the Safeguarding tab;
- The Society was due to have a canonical visitation in November 2021, followed by a General Assembly of the Irish British Province, and the Provincial could ensure that safeguarding was on the agenda for both. To assist with this, the reviewer undertook to make available a brief written feedback on the Review that could be given to the canonical visitor and to members attending the General Assembly, if appropriate. (This written feedback was shared with all the members and at the assembly).

Conclusion

The Society has now addressed the deficits that were apparent in the 2013 Review and the Provincial and the members involved with safeguarding, along with the Provincial Secretary are to be commended for the improvements in awareness-raising and in child safeguarding practice that have taken place since then.